

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER Serial No. 10/525,263

AUG 15 2006

Remarks

Claims 1, 5, 6 and 9 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-12 are pending.

Amendments:

Claim 1 was amended to recite that n has an average value in the range 1.6--2.4. Support for amended claim 1 can be found in the specification at page 3, line 15. No new matter has been added.

Claims 5 and 9 were amended to correct typographical errors.

Claim 6 was amended to be consistent with amended claim 1, i.e., to recite that the 2-ethylhexanol is reacted with 1.6-2.4 moles of propylene oxide. Again, no new matter has been added.

Rejections:

On page 2, paragraph 2, of the Office Action, claims 1, 2 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by DD 292,147 A5. Specifically, the Office Action contends that the DD 292,147 reference discloses ethylhexanol propoxylated with 2.5-3.5 equivalents of propylene oxide, followed by ethoxylation with 2-3 equivalents of ethylene oxide. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants respectfully submit that nowhere does the DD 292,147 reference disclose an alkoxylate mixture according to the formula as presently claimed (in amended claim 1), which includes 1.6-2.4 PO units and 3.0-5.5 EO units per each 2-ethylhexyl group.

Applicants have found that selection of the claimed ranges for the PO and EO units results in improved cleaning efficiency when the mixture is used in an aqueous

Serial No. 10/525,263

cleaning solution. (See Ex. 5 of the application). This was acknowledged in the Office Action on page 4, paragraph 7, where it is stated that "applicant has demonstrated that small changes in m and n can result in large changes in properties, so that the person of ordinary skill in the surfactant art would not expect similar properties from products which are broadly similar."

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1, 2 and 10 as being anticipated by DD 292,147 A5 be withdrawn.

On pages 2-3, paragraphs 3-5, of the Office Action, claims 6-9, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over DD 292,147 A5, in view of Decker et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,343,616). The Office Action indicates that although the DD 292,147 reference does not disclose a synthetic procedure for producing the alkoxylate mixture, the method of producing the mixture according to claim 6 would be obvious in view of Decker which teaches the preparation of propoxylated and ethoxylated 2-ethylhexanol. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants respectfully submit that nowhere does either of the DD 292,147 or Decker references, taken alone or read together, teach or suggest the method according to claim 6 as presently amended. Claim 6 has been amended, consistent with amended claim 1, to recite that 2-ethylhexanol is reacted with 1.6-2.4 moles of propylene oxide (per mole of the 2-ethylhexanol) followed by reaction with 3.0-5.5 moles of ethylene oxide (per mole of the 2-ethylhexanol propoxylate).


Applicants submit that the DD 292,147 A5 reference actually teaches away from the presently claimed invention, by teaching that in the case of a 2-ethylhexyl group the amount of PO should be 2.5-3.5 and the amount of EO should be 2-3. Moreover, as discussed above, applicants have shown unexpected results by selecting the claimed ranges for the propylene oxide and ethylene oxide reaction steps.

Serial No. 10/525,263

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 6-9, 11 and 12 as being obvious over DD 292,147 A5, in view of Decker, be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully submit that the application, including claims 1-12, as amended, is now in proper form for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited. If resolution of any remaining issue is required prior to allowance of the application, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert C. Morriss
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 42,910

Akzo Nobel Inc.
Intellectual Property Dept.
7 Livingstone Avenue
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522-3408
(914) 674-5459